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SENATE

{ REPORT
{ No. 1983

NOGALES SANITATION PROJECT

JUNE 28 (legislative day, JUNE 27). 1952.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. GEORGE, from the Committee on Committee on Foreign Relations,
submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany S. 960]

The Committee on Foreign Relations, having had under consideration S. 960, to authorize an agreement between the United States and Mexico for the joint operation and maintenance by the International Boundary and Water Commission, United States and Mexico, of the Nogales sanitation project, and for other purposes, reports the bill favorably to the Senate and recommends that it do pass.

COMMITTEE ACTION

S. 960 was introduced by Senator Hayden on February 26, 1951. On June 10, 1952, the committee received a letter from Senator Hayden and Senator McFarland, urging consideration of the bill. The committee examined and reported the bill favorably on June 27, 1952.

BACKGROUND

The international boundary between the United States and Mexico runs through the city of Nogales, Ariz. Seventy percent of the population live in Mexico and 30 percent in the United States. Sewage disposal has long been a problem for this divided city, particularly for the area within the United States since the topographical slope is from Mexico to the United States. A sanitation project was initiated in 1943 and appropriations were made by Public Law 490, July 5, 1946, for the construction by the International Boundary Commission, United States and Mexico of an outfall sewer and a disposal plant. The total estimated cost of this project was \$466,000 to be shared equally by the two countries. The Federal Government has been paying the United States portion of this burden. Construction of the project is nearly completed and provision must now be made for its operation and maintenance.

PROVISIONS OF BILL

S. 960 provides that the International Boundary Commission, notwithstanding any other law, shall maintain and operate the Nogales sanitation project under an agreement to be negotiated by the Secretary of State with Mexico. This agreement is to contain provisions for the division of costs between the two governments, provided that before the entry into force of this agreement, the city of Nogales, Arizona, shall give adequate assurances to the Secretary of State that it will bear an equitable proportion of the United States cost, as determined by the United States section of the International Boundary Commission. The bill also authorizes the appropriation of the necessary sums to cover the United States costs.

NEED FOR LEGISLATION

Although this sanitation project is not in operation as yet, it is considered essential to make plans now for its future operation and maintenance in view of past experiences with similar sanitation projects.

The Senate will recall that during the Eighty-first Congress it approved an almost identical measure relating to a sanitation project in the cities of Agua Prieta, Mexico, and Douglas, Ariz. Operation of that project, also constructed by the International Boundary Commission, was assumed by the city of Douglas in 1948. Immediate difficulties developed because of the international character of the operation, the local lack of experience with sewage disposal, and the uneven growth of the two cities. To protect the Federal investment in the sanitation project and assure efficient operation and maintenance, the Congress in 1950 approved Public Law 786 which authorized the International Boundary Commission to take over under the same conditions as those specified in the pending S. 960, namely, that the costs of operation and maintenance would be shared by the local community benefited and Mexico.

COSTS INVOLVED

Inasmuch as the project is not yet in operation, it is possible only to estimate the cost of operation and maintenance to the Federal Government. It is expected that costs will run at about \$18,000 per year, the burden to be divided equally between the United States and Mexico as the construction costs were divided. Presumably also, the city of Nogales, Ariz., would share at least 50 percent of the United States costs, so that the net annual cost to the United States Government would be in the neighborhood of \$4,500. This bill carries no funds for construction.

SUPPORT FOR BILL

Besides the support of the two Senators from the State of Arizona, the bill is supported by the city of Nogales, Ariz., the International Boundary and Water Commission, the Department of State and the Bureau of the Budget. No suggestion of any opposition has come to the attention of the committee.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The situation in Nogales parallels closely the case of Douglas-Agua Prieta. The same factors which made operation and maintenance of the sanitation project by the International Boundary Commission desirable there exist in Nogales. For protection of the Federal investment in the facilities at Nogales and the best utilization of these facilities, the committee concurs in the provisions of S. 960 for operation by the International Boundary and Water Commission of the Nogales sanitation project. Action during this session would be helpful as construction of the project is slated for completion and as the city of Nogales is presently planning its budget for 1953.



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